

# Children's Play Areas

*Help Yourself!*

*How to Use the Neighborhood Matching Fund to Build  
Community*

Written by Susan Howlett

Produced by the Seattle  
Department of Neighborhoods  
with funding from the 1991  
Innovations in State and Local  
Government Award,  
a program of the Ford Foundation  
and the John F. Kennedy  
School of Government  
at Harvard University

February 1993

Norman B. Rice, Mayor  
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400 Arctic Building  
Seattle, Washington 98104  
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Parks or Schools?

#### **How Much Should We Ask For?**

#### **How Do We Raise Our Match?**

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Children's Play Areas

Public School Partnerships

Celebrating Cultural Heritage

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# **The Help Yourself! Series**

## **Help Yourself!**

Think of Seattle as a group of people around a big kitchen table. They have come together to cook dinner. There are many different kinds of ingredients and tools on the table. That is a good thing because the people around the table are all different, too — different backgrounds, different styles, different skills, different tastes.

The people at the table know best what it is that they want to end up on their plates. So, then, a reasonable way to begin the meal preparation is, as you might begin the meal itself, by saying “Please—Help yourself!”

The Help Yourself! series is intended to get you thinking about what it is that your neighborhood needs and wants. And it is intended to suggest some ways in which you can make those things happen in your neighborhood.

## **The Neighborhood Matching Fund**

Since 1989, the Neighborhood Matching Fund has been an important tool for community groups working to turn their visions into reality. The Fund provides a cash match to community contributions of volunteer time, professional services, materials, or cash in support of neighborhood-based self-help projects.

The Neighborhood Matching Fund has two parts. (1) The Small and Simple Projects Fund awards up to \$15,000 to projects that can be completed within six months of the award. You can apply for a Small and Simple award throughout the year: application deadlines come every three months. (2) The Large Projects Fund awards up to \$100,000, which can be completed within 12 months. The Department of Neighborhoods can help you in shaping your project and in applying to the Neighborhood Matching Fund. Here are some of its resources.

**Staff Consultation.** Department staff are glad to talk to you and your group about your proposed project.

**Workshops.** Workshops are offered on putting together a project and on the application process.

**The Help Yourself! Series.** These booklets are organized by project type and offer information to help you do your own project.

For more information about any of these resources, call the Department of Neighborhoods at (206) 684-0464.

## **What's in Help Yourself!**

The Help Yourself! booklets feature projects that have been done using the Neighborhood Matching Fund. Each booklet profiles several projects, describing what they did and just how they went about doing it. Each project has its unique circumstances and its unique style of leadership and community involvement. Yet each project offers valuable lessons that can be applied elsewhere.

The booklets present other neighborhood-based self-help projects as well, sponsored by the Neighborhood Matching Fund and by other funders. The people who live and work in a community are the ones who know best what their community needs. But these projects may spark some ideas that you can apply to your own neighborhood.

Finally, the booklets list resources to help you conceive, plan, organize, fund, and otherwise implement your own project. The most important of these resources are the neighborhood people who have done their own projects. They can tell you more about their projects and point you to the information, persons, and agencies that helped them. And they may be able to steer you clear of some wrong steps that they took. In many cases, these people didn't have a very clear idea of how to make their projects happen when they first began. But they did begin. That first step may be the biggest step of all.

## **Topics**

The four booklets in the first series discuss some common kinds of projects completed through the Neighborhood Matching Fund:

- Environmental Projects
- Children's Play Areas
- Public School Partnerships
- Celebrating Cultural Heritage

The booklets are as different as their topics but all offer practical how-to information, resources, and suggestions for where else to go for even more resources.

We hope that the booklets may also inspire you. The real inspiration, though, comes from talking to people who have worked and, often, are continuing to work on neighborhood projects. Some have begun new phases to their original projects and some have moved on to new projects. Making a difference in your neighborhood is the greatest inspiration of all. It is exciting to see what you do make a difference.

If you want ideas on making a difference in your business district, you can request a copy of the "Guide to Improvement Projects for Seattle Business Districts" from the Neighborhood Business Council, 500 Wall St., Ste. 410, Seattle WA 98121, (206) 448-9340.

## **Where the Series Came From**

In 1991 Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and the Ford Foundation chose the Neighborhood Matching Fund as one of 10 of this country's most innovative programs in state and local government. The Innovations Award brought with it national recognition for the thousands of people who have helped make the Neighborhood Matching Fund a success. The award also brought with it \$100,000. That money was earmarked to be used to expand the program and promote its replication in other places. A portion of the award was used to produce the Help Yourself! series of booklets.

Special thanks are due to Mayor Norman B. Rice for his support of City-neighborhood partnerships and to Councilmember Jim Street, one of the early architects of the Neighborhood Matching Fund.

Thanks also to all those who are featured in these booklets: they patiently and enthusiastically gave their time to talk to the writers and generously agreed to be listed as contact persons.

## **Conclusion**

To use again the image of people coming together around a kitchen table: There is enough on the table to feed everyone.

The Neighborhood Matching Fund and other sources can provide your group with financial support, technical assistance, and encouragement.

Other neighborhood-based organizations have had the people, the passion, the sweat equity, the inspiration, and the stick-to-itiveness to make their projects happen.

Yours can too.

# **Children's Play Areas — An Introduction**

*"I felt a great sense of joy the first time I saw kids of all ages really using our new park. I realized that we had created the neighborhood focal point — the sense of community — that was our goal. It made all our efforts seem worthwhile."*

Jill Young Zuckerman, Bryant

So you want to build a play area for the children in your neighborhood.

Others who have done so will tell you that the community gets much more out of the process than just a playground.

Clarifying who you're doing this for and why, and clarifying who can help you and how, will instill a sense of shared mission among everyone involved. Getting help from every resource you can muster will help build a broad base of support that you can turn to again and again.

A project like this does more than cement a climber in some sand. It binds together your whole community. Look at this process as an adventure. And know that your efforts will be a gift to your entire neighborhood for years to come.

## **Where Do We Start?**

Before you even decide to apply to the Neighborhood Matching Fund, you'll want to make sure that there is a need for a play area. Call the Department of Neighborhoods for a "Needs Assessment Workbook," created to help you evaluate your goals, your needs, and the resources available to you.

Community groups who conducted such research early on were glad to discover, for example, that their neighbors wanted a playscape for preschoolers, not 10- to 12-year-olds, or that because they intended to make it accessible to children with disabilities, one neighbor wanted to contribute several thousand dollars.

Ask if the Department of Neighborhoods is presenting any workshops for potential applicants. It may be offering sessions on how to apply to the Neighborhood Matching Fund, how to generate your portion of the match, and other helpful topics.

## Parks or Schools?

Find out who owns the property you want to improve. Most likely, you'll be working with the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation or Seattle Public Schools. Check the Resources section of this booklet to find out how to reach the appropriate people and get in touch with them **immediately**.

If it's the Department of **Parks**, ask Parks staff for:

- Base maps and topographic maps.
- Results of surveys of the property.
- Reports on existing conditions.
- Lists of experienced landscape architects, consultants, and contractors.
- Ideas and even drawings of possible configurations.

Find out from the Parks Department about government standards regarding accessibility, safety, drainage, grading, maintenance, and other factors. If the property belongs to **Seattle Public Schools**, approach your school principal first thing. Ask for a document called a "Pre-Application for Self-Help Projects" and fill it out with the principal. Then ask her or him to help guide that document through the School District's Facilities Center (see Resources), where your proposal will be reviewed by the Risk Management Department (for liability issues), Grounds Supervisors, Operations, and the Maintenance Manager.

If time is a factor, you may need to ask your principal or other school official to hand-carry that "Pre-App" through the various departments. The process often takes several months.

Keep in mind that the Parks Department and the School District are ultimately responsible for insuring and maintaining your proposed play area. The groups who have had the most cooperation from these departments are the ones that have taken the time to cultivate relationships with the appropriate staff people and asked often for their input.

## How Much Should We Ask For?

If you're reluctant to take the plunge and ask for a major award, you could do what Mt. Baker Community Club did, and apply to the Small and Simple Projects Component of the Neighborhood Matching Fund to cover your needs assessment and design development.

The PTA at Maple Elementary on South Beacon Hill wanted to augment its playscape with "one imaginative playtoy for small-fries," so it applied to the Small and Simple Projects Fund. The award amount requested was matched with lots of volunteer time preparing the site. Seattle Public Schools agreed to maintain the structure if the PTA would do periodic cleanup of the play area.

To determine how much to ask for, get rough costs from **playground equipment** vendors and from neighborhood groups that have recently purchased equipment. Call a handful of **landscape architects** to see what the average hourly rate is and about how many hours to budget for. Try to identify costs associated with **demolition and removal** of existing structures or asphalt.

Include the cost of a **survey** and a **permit**, if you think you may need to do site work such as regrading, or new drainage or watering system installation. Also consider the type of **surface** you will ultimately need (wood chips? sand? grass?) and what type of **barrier** you'll install to keep it in place (concrete curbs? wood edging?). On top of the basic costs, figure in a **contingency** of at least 15% to cover unforeseen expenses.

One issue your group should resolve early is whether to (1) save money by doing a lot of the design and construction yourselves or (2) build into your budget enough money to hire professional designers and contractors.

Although it took a lot of time and the learning curve was steep, Maple Leaf neighbors were proud to have designed their own structure and installed it themselves. Laurelhurst, on the other hand, said it was much easier to keep everyone happy and involved if some of the major elements were handled by seasoned pros.

A word of advice from several groups: Overestimate your costs. No matter how thorough your planning, something will come up that you hadn't anticipated. Or costs will increase between the time you apply and the time you begin construction. Better to ask for what you think is too much than to ask for too little and have to scramble for more money at the last minute.

Ask the Parks Department or School District to review your budget and see if you've left out major items. The Parks Department requires that you add on 15% to your total project budget to cover departmental costs.

The Department of Neighborhoods often conducts workshops, scheduled prior to final application deadlines, on how to build play areas and how to calculate construction budgets. For more information, call the Department.

*"Getting accurate cost estimates is so important. Mistakes will haunt you and you may find that you're required to complete your project by the deadline even if you don't have enough money."*

Jeff Grose, Bryant

## How Do We Raise Our Match?

When neighbors wanted to add new play equipment at Madrona Park, their entire neighborhood match consisted of their commitment to demolish the existing structure.

Other neighborhoods have built their match from a combination of cash, volunteer labor, donated equipment and supplies, and donated professional services.

### Cash

Just about anything goes when it comes to raising the cash. Most PTAs or community groups opt for a combination of sales, events, and personal contacts.

### Sales

Selling T-shirts, candy, pizza, and gift items can generate revenue and involve the kids too. Residents of Alki raised thousands of dollars by offering to put names on a dedication plaque for \$50 per family or \$100 per business. A rummage sale in Maple Leaf generated nearly \$3,500.

### Events

If well planned and suited to the target group, events can do more than raise money — they can foster a sense of community at the same time. Bryant sponsored two events — a pancake breakfast and a family dance — that brought together people of different generations and backgrounds toward a common goal.

Laurelhurst organized a tour of neighborhood homes to raise money. The tour was so successful (raising nearly \$10,000) and so much fun, that it's become a regular event. They also held a book-signing and poster-signing party at a neighborhood restaurant, featuring artist Jacob Lawrence, who lives in Laurelhurst.



## Personal Contacts

Personal contacts work well when soliciting neighborhood merchants, other community groups, service clubs, alumni from the school, or older people in the neighborhood whose grown children have benefited from the school or park.

## Going Door-to-Door

Going door-to-door to gather support may be one of the hardest methods but is well worth the effort: it generates a sense of ownership among neighbors, not to mention pledges of volunteer work, and leads to sources of donated materials and services. Best of all, when the community wants to do another project a year or two later, much of the groundwork already has been laid.

When you're trying to estimate how much you can generate through door-to-door canvassing, take this tip from Maple Leaf neighbors who raised 40% of their match this way: You will find someone home at half of the houses you approach, and half of those people will give. The average gift in Maple Leaf was between \$15 and \$20 — Volunteer Park averaged more like \$35.

## Approaching Area Merchants

Approaching area merchants has been fruitful in some neighborhoods and less profitable in others. In the case of Lowell Elementary, since the local merchants association is the school's PIPE (Partners in Public Education) partner, the merchants took a leadership role in both organizing and raising funds. Maple Leaf neighbors raised 40% of their project match from neighborhood businesses, with gifts ranging from \$50 to \$2,500.

If businesses can't help with a cash contribution, ask them if they could help in another way. Bryant's construction volunteers got free pizzas and drinks from a local pizzeria, and a camera store took professional photos of the playground.

Laurelhurst found that their most effortless fund raising came in the form of asking neighbors to tack an additional \$10 or \$20 onto their yearly Community Club dues when those statements went out.

## Volunteer Labor

The volunteer labor can be pledged by parents and children associated with the requesting group. It can also be pledged by other interested parties, such as scout troops, service clubs, military volunteers, corporate volunteers, special interest groups, sports clubs, senior centers, boys and girls clubs, community center participants, community council members — you name it. "Skilled" volunteer labor is valued at a higher rate than "unskilled."

Count as potential match the time that people spend on "unskilled" tasks such as:

- Planning
- Demolition
- Site preparation
- Baby-sitting
- Painting
- Planting trees, shrubs, grass
- Spreading wood chips or sand.
- Time spent raising money does not count toward your match.

When you're figuring out how many volunteer hours to put in your application budget, don't underestimate how much time it takes to organize volunteers and get them to make decisions. **Everything** will take

longer than you think. It makes more sense to aim high on volunteer time than to aim high on the amount of cash you can raise.

## Donated Supplies

Ask everyone you know to contribute materials and supplies for your project. Will you need wood, hardware, landscaping, cement, paint, signs, fencing? If you need to rent equipment for a project (rollers, spreaders, power tools), ask if the rental company will donate it. Alki Park neighbors got their playground equipment vendor to give them a discount on the structure. Maple Elementary participants got a break from their wood chip vendor.

## Donated Professional Services

Seek out landscape architects or designers in your community who will donate their expertise. Ask every contractor you work with (surveyors, builders, painters, asphalt or concrete installers and recyclers) to donate their services.

Mt. Baker Community Club members worked with a Child Development Specialist. She helped them determine what physical activities were appropriate for which ages, then agreed to donate her services. Both Mt. Baker and Ravenna-Eckstein gathered together several architects to brainstorm design ideas, accounting for many hours of donated professional services.

Several neighborhoods have asked that professionals involved in the process log in all the hours they spend but bill for only half of them, donating the other half.

## How Do We Identify People to Help?

When Bryant neighbors were doing their initial needs assessment, they asked people to make pledges of time, money, talents, or connections at the same time. They asked whomever they contacted.

Just a few of the many useful offers they came up with were:

- Construction help from parents in a nearby preschool.
- Volunteer labor from Cub Scout troop members and their parents.
- Free booth space for fund raising at the local shopping center's big sidewalk sale.
- Use of power tools, trucks, and implements.
- Asphalt removal by the Navy Seabees.
- Connections to professionals or elected officials.
- Food.

*"Your committee should be people with energy and enthusiasm and vision. If you're not having fun, then it's not worth doing."*

Victoria Millard, Bryant

The neighborhoods with the greatest community involvement have done their surveying door-to-door. Parents with their children have taken the time to visit with people and offer them forms to fill out.

You can also distribute your information through:

- Neighborhood schools and preschools
- Community council
- Community center

- Chamber of commerce
- Local merchants
- Organizations that use the school, park, or community center for meetings, classes, or other activities
- Individuals who use the park
- Local service organizations (such as Rotary Club, Lions Club)
- Major housing complexes
- Senior center
- Youth activity club.

Don't forget that the kids themselves can be a great resource. One school assigned all the children to describe what they wanted, using words and pictures. The children were quite clear about it: they wanted grass and they wanted a curvy slide, plus a few dangerous but imaginative ideas. They were also willing to do a lot of the work because they had been included in the process.

## How Do We Organize Ourselves?

The most successful neighborhood playscape projects have had about a half dozen strongly committed people who served as a core group. It is helpful if those persons have access to or are familiar with the project's essential elements.

For instance, several groups have had one or more landscape designers or architects in the core group. One group had a parent who was experienced with public school administration. Another group said it was crucial to include someone familiar with construction and the bidding process.

It is essential that you have a responsible person to act as your fiscal agent — the person in charge of documenting your income and expenses and in charge of handling all your money. One group used the PTA Treasurer as its fiscal agent. Others have used the community center staff, the community council, the landscape design firm, or the school's PIPE (Partners in Public Education) partner. Madrona neighbors used the Parks Department as their fiscal agent when they got a Small and Simple award for play equipment.

The more people you have in your core group, the more protected you are against burnout. If the project takes longer than anticipated, you'll want back-up volunteers to support the original core group.

Ideally, you will be able to assign at least one person to each of the following categories:

- Overall project management
- Public involvement
- Design development
- Fund raising oversight
- Volunteer coordination for general support
- Volunteer coordination for fund-raising events and campaigns
- Volunteer coordination for construction phase
- Fiscal agent
- Construction oversight.

*"Each group should have one main leader — a spiritual leader if you will — whose sole function is oversight and delegation. That's a full-time job right there."*

Jeff Grose, Bryant

Bryant also found it helpful to assign someone to act as job captain for each Saturday work party. The job captain was responsible for opening the building, getting the equipment there, getting volunteers, assigning tasks, troubleshooting, and cleaning up afterward. If the project manager gets too involved in task-oriented details, she or he will be too busy to handle oversight.

To keep your core group motivated for the long haul, find out what people really like to do and have them do that. Don't ask people to go door-to-door if it paralyzes them with fear. Let them do something that they feel they're good at. Don't have meetings if you can accomplish your business by phone. Nothing wears a group out faster than unnecessary meetings.

*"Develop strong relationships among the people on your committee so there's shared responsibility. That really helped us sell our group when we needed support from the rest of the community and it also helped prevent burnout."*

Jill Young Zuckerman, Bryant

## How Can We Strengthen Our Request?

### Elicit Community Involvement

To gain the broadest possible community support for their new playscape, the Mt. Baker Community Council members encouraged participation from every imaginable sector of their community.

They invited people from the neighborhood's daycare centers, preschools, elementary schools, community center, and businesses to initial planning meetings. They even got the Parks Department to distribute flyers door-to-door about the community meeting. At that community meeting, people used colored dots to vote on designs taped to the walls.

The project got letters of support from churches, from schools, from PTAs, from big apartment complexes that house large populations of Southeast Asian immigrants, and from the local economic development group.

Alki Park project members included in their design process an organization that serves persons with physical disabilities. Along with the benefit of its input, the organization contributed several thousand dollars and helped garner a major corporate gift.

### Build Partnerships with Property Owners

Whether you're working with the Department of Parks and Recreation or with the School District, it's imperative to get to know their staff and **get them involved from the very beginning**. Since they will most likely be accountable for long-term maintenance, insurance, and other responsibilities, you will do best if you get their input and approval early and often.

It is to your advantage to ascertain what contacts you may have on City Council, the School Board, and other bodies that can offer assistance. Make sure your school's principal is enthusiastic about your project and willing to serve as your advocate throughout the process. Spend time with staff at the Department of Neighborhoods and the Department of Parks to let them become involved in your project.

### Have Your Ducks in a Row Before You Apply

The more highly developed your design is, the more likely you are to get funded. Spend enough time on design development to let you really sell your project to the review team.

Have as much of your funds committed as possible. It's preferable to raise money early, when there is fresh enthusiasm — and time — rather than later on, when insufficient money could jeopardize the completion of your project.

Be able to show that your core group is a well-organized, balanced team that is backed by enough volunteer and fund raising support to make it all happen.

*“Treat your project like a business. The more professionally you run your process, the more credibility you will have with the City, with funders, and with your volunteers.”*

Jeff Grose, Bryant

## Tips

If bids are higher than you expected, move the parts of your project which can be easily separated (such as landscaping, benches, pieces of modular equipment) to “Stage 2” and apply for another award the following year.

Use the school's artist in residence to help generate some permanent art for your play area. Bryant was funded by the King County Arts Commission (through the 1% for Art program) to create a dragon crafted out of hundreds of individual tiles made by the school children.

Have volunteers start documenting every hour they spend even before your project gets City approval. That way, you can work the bugs out of your accounting system and get people in the habit of keeping track by the time it really counts.

Try some new ideas. Playgrounds are changing. Look into the new “slouch park” equipment designed for preteens. Ask designers what other communities are trying.

Pace yourselves so that all the same leaders don't have to be involved from beginning to end. You'll need an infusion of new blood part way through and again at the end. Try to build that supplementary enthusiasm into your original plan.

Put someone in charge of thanking all your donors and volunteers. A little thanks goes a long way toward keeping people invested and enthusiastic. It will also help if you have to go back to donors a second or third time.

Give yourself the flexibility to change your mind. If you discover you don't like the vendor that you identified in your application, choose a different one. If neighbors are resisting your initial design, change it. It's important to end up with something that makes people happy.

Find out as early as possible whether your project will require a City permit (for building or regrading or drainage work). The permit process takes several months and could hold up your project even if everything else is in order.

Get everything in writing. In several instances, verbal okays were reversed after the group had begun work. And one group lost a lot of money and time because of a vendor that failed to deliver certain parts at the promised time.

You don't have to hire professional contractors to install your play structure if you have qualified professionals on site to advise and supervise volunteer builders.

Once a neighborhood group has been through the Neighborhood Matching Fund process, the group is likely to decide to apply for another project in the next cycle. Make sure that you maintain good relationships with school or City staff so that you can anticipate their enthusiastic cooperation with future projects.

Keep records of correspondence, requests, decisions, approvals, and agreements. These documents will protect you against people with short memories and those who change their minds while the process is in motion. These documents will also aid you in the event of an audit or if any problems arise. Once the project is over, store the documents with the PTA office or community center staff.

*“Be prepared for the long haul. Realistically, we spent the first year pulling the community together and deciding what we wanted to do. The second year we did our fund raising (first with the Neighborhood Matching Fund application and then during the school year when we couldn’t tear the playground apart). The third year we built it.”*

Victoria Millard, Bryant

## Checklist

### Phase I — Needs Assessment and Design Development

Visit other neighborhoods’ playgrounds with your children.

Ask other neighborhoods about their playscapes’ pros and cons.

Talk to the leaders of other playground projects.

Gather catalogs from equipment vendors; ask them to give you ideas and drawings.

Determine community needs and desires via surveys and public meetings.

Put together a core group of leaders — make it larger than you think you’ll need and with back-ups.

Meet with staff from the Department of Parks or School District to understand their requirements, time frames, and standards for such things as accessibility, safety, and maintenance.

Collect design suggestions from architects, designers, vendors.

### Phase II — Generating Revenue and Support

Attend workshops on how to apply to the Neighborhood Matching Fund and how to raise your match.

Get estimates for materials, supplies, and services for your project budget.

Solicit pledges of support for your project.

Complete your Neighborhood Matching Fund preapplication.

Attend review committee hearings (in July) to answer questions about your proposal.

Begin organizing helpers for fund-raising and construction phases.

Begin initial fund-raising campaigns.

Celebrate Neighborhood Matching Fund award.

### Phase III — Implementation

Prepare RFP (Request for Proposal) for design services.

Prepare RFP (Request for Proposal) for construction.

Get approval from Department of Neighborhoods to proceed.

Apply for licenses and permits as needed.

Choose designer and contractor(s).

Continue fund-raising events and campaigns.

Complete site preparation.

Complete construction.

Finish landscaping and mop-up.

Celebrate completion.

*“It’s crucial to have a celebration when you’re done. We had pinched pennies for so long, we decided to splurge on our party. We recognized our volunteers in style and the whole neighborhood felt a great sense of accomplishment.”*

Janet Hyde-Wright, Maple Leaf

## Resources

### **Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

700 3rd Ave., Suite 400 Arctic Bldg.

Seattle WA 98104

(206) 684-0464

Ask the Department for names of playground equipment vendors (get their catalogs), landscape architects or designers, contractors, and individuals from other Seattle neighborhoods who have created new play areas recently. Check to see if the Department has scheduled workshops on how to apply to the Neighborhood Matching Fund, how to create a play area, how to draft a construction budget, and what other resources are available.

### **Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation**

*Rosemary Wills*

2911 2nd Ave.

Seattle WA 98121

(206) 684-7038

*Rosemary Wills* is the Department’s Senior Landscape Architect. She can provide you with base maps, topographic maps, survey results, and reports on existing conditions. The Department has lists of landscape architects, consultants, and contractors who are familiar with playground areas and who can even do drawings for you. Ask the Department for standards regarding accessibility, safety, drainage, grading, and maintenance. Ask for help determining if you’ll need to get a permit.

### **Seattle Public Schools**

#### **Facilities Center**

*Elaine Peterson*

4141 4th Ave. S

Seattle WA 98134

(206) 298-7528

The Facilities Center is the conduit for School District participation in your project. Once you’ve gotten your “Pre-Application for Self-Help Projects” from your principal and filled it out, it will go through several steps at the Facilities office. You can ask this office for guidelines for playgrounds, safety standards, and playground checklists.

### **Leaders from Recent Neighborhood Playground Projects**

Alki

*Kathy Thompson*, 938-1245

Bryant

*Victoria Millard, 525-8367*

*Jeff Grose, 524-4765*

Laurelhurst

*Kent Mettler, 525-2221*

Lowell Elementary (Capitol Hill)

*Carolyn Wolf, 322-1610*

Madrona

*Sally Alhadeff, 872-9600*

Maple Elementary (Beacon Hill)

*Gale Kroll, 932-8884*

Maple Leaf

*Janet Hyde-Wright, 522-9128*

Montlake

*Craig Soper, 296-3486*

Mt. Baker

*Betty Pine, 723-9624*

*“The kids really learned a lot by watching the whole project. It was an education — seeing how the process worked, making decisions for a whole community, raising money, and building the structure.”*

Kathy Thompson, Alki

*“Try to strike a balance between having a fantastic design that costs a lot and choosing equipment that is affordable but unimaginative. Too many playgrounds sit unused because the design wasn’t well thought out.”*

Kent Mettler, Laurelhurst

*“What you envision can be done.”*

Victoria Millard, Bryant